

Island Communities: Pitcairn Islands

by Geir Sør-Reime



1940 1st stamp issue (Sc. 5)

The Pitcairn Islands, which consists of Pitcairn Island itself and the outlying islands of Ducie, Oeno and Henderson, has an area of 18.1 square miles and a current population of 67. Only Pitcairn Island itself is populated.

Scenery of the island has appeared on many stamp issues, including a 1981 10-cent issue showing a view of the island, and a 1996 set showing land-



1981 scenery (Sc. 199)



1981 scenery (Sc. 200)



1993 scenery (Sc. 384)



1993 scenery (Sc. 385)



1996 supply ship (Sc. 441)



1996 supply ship (Sc. 444)



1997 Christian's Cave (Sc. 479)

ing of supplies on the island, a 1997 set featuring Christian's Cave, an early hiding place on the island, the important



1997 Christian's
Cave (Sc. 480)

apiculture on a 1999 set, woodcarving on a 2001 set, weaving on a 2002 set, and a 2004 scenery set.

Archaeological evidence shows that Polynesians lived on Pitcairn and Henderson for several centuries. Polynesian cave dwellers on Henderson were featured on a 2006 souvenir sheet, and Polynesian rock carvers on a 2007 sheet. Polynesian artifacts appeared on a 1971 set of four stamps.



1999 Apiculture (Sc. 509)



1971 Polynesian artifacts, including rock carvings (Sc. 119, 121, 122)



The islands were uninhabited when they were discovered by Europeans, Henderson and Ducie in 1606, Pitcairn in 1767 and Oeno in 1819. Aerial views of all islands of the group appeared on a 1989 set of stamps.



1989 aerial views of the islands of the Pitcairn group (Sc. 327-30)

The bicentenary of the discovery of Pitcairn was celebrated on a 1967 set of five stamps. The annual visit to Oeno was the theme of a 1995 set. Views from Ducie and Oeno appeared on a 2005 set, and views from Henderson on a similar, 2006 set. Satellite views of all islands appeared on a 2008 set of circular stamps.



*1967 for bicentenary of discovery
of Pitcairn (here Sc. 71)*



1995 Holiday on Oeno Island (Sc. 427, 430)



Left, 2005 view of Ducie Island (Sc. 610) and Oeno Island (Sc. 614)

Pitcairn was settled in 1790 by mutineers from HMAV *Bounty*. Their settlement remained undiscovered by others until 1808. The bicentenary of the settlement was celebrated with twelve stamps in 1989, six stamps in 1990 and six stamps in 1991. A 1983 set of four commemorated the 175th anniversary



2008 satellite image of Pitcairn Island (Sc. 686)



1989 Bicentenary issue (I) (Sc. 320)



sary and a 2008 souvenir sheet the bicentenary of the discovery of the mutineer community.

The entire population was moved to Tahiti in 1831, but many soon returned to Pitcairn. In 1838, Pitcairn was made a British colony and received its own Constitution, the 150th anniversary of which was commemorated with four 2008 stamps.



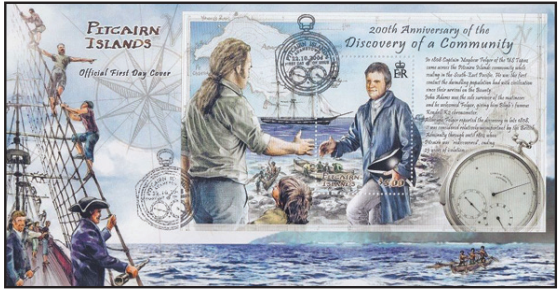
2008 150th anniversary of Pitcairn Constitution (Sc. 315, 317)



1989 Bicentenary issue (III) (Sc. 331)



1991 Bicentenary celebrations (Sc. 347)



2008 Bicentenary of discovery of settlement (Sc. 680)

Due to the increasing number of inhabitants, the whole community in 1856 again was moved, this time to Norfolk Island. Many of them returned to Pitcairn in 1859 and 1864. The 125th anniversary of this was commemorated by three stamps each from Pitcairn and Norfolk in 1981, and in 2006, the 150th anniversary of the resettling on Norfolk Island was commemorated with similar stamps issued both by Pitcairn and Norfolk Island.



2006 150th anniversary of migration to Norfolk Island (Norfolk Sc. 643a-d)

Island Communities: Pitcairn Islands, Pt. 2

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1994 Early Pitcairners (Sc. 399)

(Continued from January 16, 2015)
Early Pitcairners were portrayed on a 1994 set of four stamps.

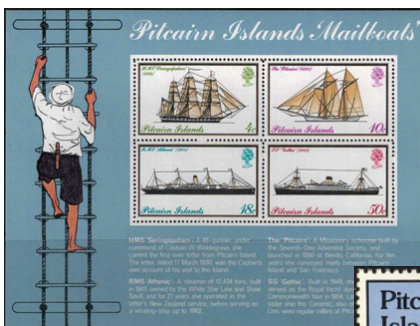
In 1902, the three other islands were annexed by Britain, and in 1938, they were merged with Pitcairn into one colony. In 1937, the population was 233, but after WWII, the population has gradually declined.

A regular mail service was first introduced 1921, but at that time, no stamps were

available, and letters were handstamped "Posted in Pitcairn - No stamps available" or similarly. Such a pre-stamp letter was depicted on one of the 1974 stamps issued for the centenary of the Universal Postal Union, another of which depicted the Pitcairn post-office.



1974 set for centenary of UPU (Sc. 142) including stamp showing unstamped letter with "POSTED AT PITCAIRN ISLAND/NO STAMPS AVAILABLE" cachet



and west were first depicted on a 1985 set of four stamps, with four more following 1987. Cruise liners occasionally calling at the island were depicted on four 1991



1991 cruise ships (Sc. 350)



2011 supply ships

stamps, and also on four 2001 and four 2013 stamps. In 2003, a souvenir sheet marked 21 years of Blue Star Line visits to Pitcairn. Modern supply vessels were honored on a set of four 2011 stamps.



1985 passing ships (Sc. 261)



2001 cruise ships (Sc. 531)

Ships that have delivered mail to Pitcairn were first featured on a 1975 set of four stamps. In 1971, the Royal Visit overprint on one of the 1969 definitives was in fact carried to the island on the Royal Yacht.

Ships passing Pitcairn on their way between east

The free postage was withdrawn 1926, but a New Zealand postal agency using New Zealand stamps was then opened 1927 and closed October 14, 1940, the day before the distinct Pitcairn Islands stamps were introduced. On October 15, 1940, a set of 8 pictorial stamps were released. Two further values were added 1951. In 1990, the 50th anniversary of Pitcairn stamps was commemorated with



1946 Peace issue (Sc. 9)

five stamps. In 1946, 1948, 1949 and 1953, Pitcairn was included in the British colonial omnibus issues, for Victory, Royal Silver Wedding, 75th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, respectively.

A new pictorial definitive series, now including a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, was released 1957, with a corrected inscription on the 4d. value ("School teacher's house" instead of "School") issued 1958, and a new watermark on the 1/2 d value released 1963.



1957-58 Definitives (including corrected inscription on 4d.) (Sc. 26, 27)



Pitcairn's first distinct commemorative stamps were issued 1961, on the centenary of the return of Pitcairn Islanders from



1964 definitives (Sc. 39, 42)



1966 World Cup Soccer (Sc. 60)



1965 Churchill (Sc. 58)

Norfolk Island. A completely new pictorial definitive series was issued 1964-65. Between 1963 and 1966, Pitcairn again participated in several omnibus issues.

To be Continued